

Northampton Mercury



Thursday, December 29, 2011

First published 1720

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Happy New Year from all of us at the Mercury!

Footballers raise cash in memory of Richard

A FANCY dress football match in memory of a professional footballer, who died suddenly, raised £800 towards improving facilities for young people in the area of Northampton where he grew up.

Ex-Cobblers trainee Richard Butcher, who played for League Two team Macclesfield Town, died of a rare heart condition in January, aged just 29.

The midfielder played for Rushden & Diamonds and Kettering Town, before establishing himself as a regular League player with Lincoln City, Oldham Athletic, Peterborough United, Notts County and then Macclesfield.

Family and friends of the player, who was a pupil at Mereway and Delapre Primary schools, donned fancy dress for a memorial match at Far Cotton Recreation ground on Boxing Day.

It was then followed by a raffle at the Loco Club in St Leonard's Road, Far Cotton.

His mum, Gayle Butcher, aged 48, and dad Richard, aged 51, have set about raising money in his memory to improve football facilities



Supporters at the game held in memory of Richard Butcher (inset)

for young players in Far Cotton where their son grew up and where they still live.

The match and raffle, which included a signed England shirt, raised £800 towards the fund.

She said: "I was really surprised how much we raised considering everyone is a bit skint this year and with it being Christmas.

"It was a difficult day as we still miss Richard like mad but the teams were really passionate about it and we raised quite a bit of money.

"There were times when I was in tears and some of the players were in tears which didn't help because that got me all choked up.

"I'm so proud of them because they really did put

their heart and soul into it. People in Far Cotton have been so supportive," she added.

The memorial fund, which has now passed £10,000 will go towards a new pitch and clubhouse in the Far Cotton area and the Butchers will be meeting council officials next month to push the project forward.



'Despicable' thieves raid memorials at crematorium

CREMATORIUM bosses were "shocked and disgusted" after thieves looted a garden of remembrance in Milton Malsor of 50 brass memorial plaques.

The thieves, who have been described as "despicable" by police, raided the Memorial Gardens at the Counties Crematorium, in Towcester Road, last week, stealing plaques from graves.

Detectives said the theft took place between Thursday, December 15, and Thursday last week, but believed the theft was most likely to have taken place last Wednesday night.

A spokesman for the crematorium, which is managed by Dignity Funerals, said staff were now contacting families of the people whose plaques were stolen. The crematorium has said it will replace the plaques free of charge.

The spokesman said: "Our staff at the crematorium are shocked and disgusted by the thefts.

"We will be contacting the families and will offer to replace any plaque that has been stolen at no cost to the families concerned.

"Our staff remain vigilant to try to prevent this type of act but we try to keep the grounds open at all times to help bereaved families in paying their respects to their loved ones."

Metal thefts have rocketed in recent months. A police spokesman said: "This is a despicable crime committed at a time when families will be more conscious of the loss of loved ones.

"We are appealing for anybody who may have information to come forward either in person or via Crimestoppers."

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'Inheriting estate made me nervous'

EARL Spencer has admitted he did not want to take on the Althorp estate when he first found out he would inherit it, but has insisted he has now made it into a family home.

The 47-year-old Earl was told he would take on the 16th century Althorp family home, near Northampton, when he was a little boy.

Speaking to American newspaper: The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, he said the idea of running the estate had initially been overwhelming.

He said: "Before I inherited, I remember as a very young boy, the first time someone told me I was going to get it, I thought, 'Oh my goodness. I don't want this.' Because to me, aged five or six, it was just a very, very odd house that my grandfather fitted into and I couldn't ever see myself fitting in there."

Discussing his earliest memories of the stately home, he de-

scribed exploring Althorp's vast attics and permanently locked rooms, adding: "The actual rooms were always a source of mystery, because there were so many of them."

"There are several dozen rooms in the attic full of different things: one full of old sets of china, and another filled with old iron beds, all sorts of things. So it was the geography of the house rather than the contents that were most interesting to a child."

"There were some rooms that were locked. I never really understood why. One of them had loads of miniature portraits in it. I think it was so the light wouldn't get onto them. But we used to spend many hours exploring the attics. They were quite scary in a way. They were all shuttered up, and the lights often didn't work. They had an atmosphere of their own."

Despite his initial reservations about the large house, the Earl has insisted it is now seen as a family home by his six children.

Kart race in memory of motorsports fan

A CHARITY kart race in Northamptonshire in the New Year will remember a racer who died from a rare form of leukaemia.

Life-long motorsport fan, Paul Lee-Davis, from Cannock, in Staffordshire, recently lost an 18-month battle with the illness.

A memorial kart race at Whilton Mill, near Daventry on Saturday, January 7, will raise money for a fund set up in his name to provide days out, treats or a break away for young adults aged between 17 and 40 who receive treatment for blood cancers such as leukaemia

and lymphoma at New Cross Hospital in Wolverhampton, where Mr Lee-Davis was treated.

Mr Lee-Davis raced TKM karts before becoming a driver in the Club 100 arrive-and-drive two-stroke championship.

The memorial event - involving both individual sprint racing and a randomly-drawn team endurance race - has been organised by friend and fellow Club 100 racer, Dan Underhill.

For further details email dan.underhill82@gmail.com, or join the Facebook group.

New year worries

AN annual survey by the Samaritans charity shows that 58 per cent of people in the East Midlands fear they won't have enough money to live comfortably in the coming year. The study also found that residents in the region are the most likely people in the UK to be concerned about losing their jobs or having difficulty finding work, with 43 per cent of people saying this is true of them. For more details, visit www.samaritans.org. To contact the Northampton branch of the charity, call Northampton 631328. The charity shop based in Kettering Road, Northampton is open Monday to Saturday.

Training for parents

FREE training sessions for practitioners who work with single parent families will be held at the Citizens' Advice Bureau in Northampton. Four one-day sessions will run between January and March at the bureau in Mercers Row. The session will explore the reality of single parents in society today, examines the barriers they face in relation to work and provide resources for practitioners. The sessions have been designed and delivered by Gingerbread, the registered charity working with and for single parents. Register online at www.eventbrite.co.uk and search for practitioner courses in Northampton. For details call Northampton 235080.

Calendar of village

RESIDENTS in Boughton, Northamptonshire, have put together a charity calendar. The 2012 calendar, which features photographs of the area all taken by villagers, will raise funds for local charities, Thomas's Fund and Boughton Pocket Park. The calendar costs £5 and is available from Smith's Farm Shop near Boughton. For details, visit <http://www.smithsfarmshop.co.uk>

NY party

A NEW Year's Eve party will take place at Brackley Town FC. Residents are invited to the club in St. James Park, Churchill Way on December 31 from 7.30pm. Tickets cost £10. To buy call 01280 704077.

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Prices at centre rise

PRICES for activities at Daventry Leisure Centre will change in the new year. The changes, which will be the first since 2009, will bring the centre in Lodge Road, Daventry in line with nearby leisure providers. Daventry Active Ltd (DAL) has revealed that from January 1 the cost of an adult swim will go up from £3.45 to £3.55 per session and a badminton court will increase from £7.95 to £8.75. The cost of hiring the whole sports hall will go from £50 to £55 per hour and the hire of the whole pool will also increase from £60 to £75 per hour. Junior swimming is currently heavily subsidised and costs £1 per session, but this will change to £2.20 from April 1, although Daventry Active Ltd will be introducing new schemes that will enable juniors to swim for less than 50p per day.

Charity has run places

RUNNERS who want to take part in the Adidas half-marathon at the Silverstone circuit can apply to run for The Stroke Association. The charity has places for 40 runners in the event, which will take place on March 11. All runners must pledge to raise £300 and receive a free running top, fund-raising pack and support on the day. Anyone interested in taking a Stroke Association charity place can email debbie.rawlings@stroke.org.uk or call 0115 8712472.

Recycle your real trees

RECYCLING collections for real Christmas trees will take place in several villages in Daventry district. Collections from more than 40 villages will take place on January 9, 12 and 13. Trees need to be left at a designated collection point by 8am on the day. To find out when the collections for each village will take place, go to www.daventrydc.gov.uk or call the district council on 01327 871100. Residents can also cut their tree into sections and put it in their brown bin for collection.



MP Brian Binley meets women who have helped make souvenir flags for the Olympics

Flying the flag for the 2012 Olympics

MORE than 700 flags have been made as special souvenirs for competitors of the London 2012 Olympic Games. Local people, schools and organisations have taken part in the nationwide Pennants4Olympics 2012 scheme, which involves designing and making unique pennants to be given to athletes, and it is expected that around 1,500 will have been

made in Northamptonshire. Northampton South MP Brian Binley saw around 200 of the flags on display when he visited an exhibition at the Weston Favell Shopping Centre in Northampton. The deadline for submissions is the end of month. For details on how to get involved, call Northampton 510174.

Spending cuts will mean 20 fewer PCSOs

LEAKED internal documents from the Guildhall show council officials fear there will be 20 fewer Police Community Support Officers on Northampton's streets because of proposed council spending cuts. As part of its annual budget plans, Northamptonshire County Council has proposed scrapping the £500,000 it pays towards funding PCSOs and Northampton Borough Council has suggested cutting a further £100,000. Documents produced by the borough council, which have been seen by our sister paper the *Chron*, suggest the county-wide cuts could lead to "20 fewer PCSOs operating in Northampton" with "all residents potentially being affected" by the cuts. The plans were attacked by the leader of the opposition Labour group at the Guildhall, Councillor Lee Mason (*Lab, Brookside*), during a council meeting last night. She said: "I'm very concerned about this attack on public safety. "We've already had the street lights switched off by the county council. Now they're saying they're going to cut funding to the PCSOs and the borough council just seems to be copying them."

She was backed by Councillor Brendan Glynane (*Lib Dem, Delapre & Briar Hill*), who added: "This attack on front line services is an absolute disgrace. "This is going to be disastrous for Northampton." But the leader of the borough council, Councillor David Mackintosh (*Con, Rectory Farm*) repeated calls he made last week, arguing that the police should pay for PCSOs. Quoting police authority documents, he said the police had savings of more than £21 million in the bank which could be used to fund PCSOs. He said: "That's money the police authority should consider using to fund policing." He was backed by the council's cabinet member for finance, Councillor Alan Bottwood (*Con, Upton*), who said: "I fully understand what people are saying about PCSOs, but I firmly believe we need to get on with providing our services and let the police worry about theirs. "We're increasing our neighbourhood wardens and we've got park rangers. We consider that our priority, not funding the police." A decision on both councils' funding cuts will be made in February.

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Drivers are warned of the dangers of drink

More than 320 breath tests were carried out on the Saturday before Christmas but only two arrests were made during the operation



MORE than 300 breath tests were carried out on drivers by Northamptonshire Police during one of the busiest nights of the year.

The campaign, which was part of Operation Roadsafe, took place in Northampton town centre on Saturday December 17 and two people were arrested for being over the legal drink-drive limit.

Police officers and PCSOs manned two points in St Peter's Way from 6pm to 9pm and from 9pm to 1am as they carried out random checks on drivers.

Pc David Lee, from the operational tactical unit, said: "The operation was a huge success, not only taking two drink drivers off the road, but several warnings were issued to drivers who did show some level of alcohol in their breath, but were under the limit."

Police carried out 322 breath tests on drivers, of which two were positive and resulted in arrests.

Two vehicles were seized by police, two endorsable fixed penalties were issued for a driver without car insurance and a driver using their mobile phone whilst driving, and 87 warnings were issued for vehicle defects.

Pc Lee said the campaign was not just about catching drink



drivers but also about educating road users about drink-driving.

He said: "It's quite a big weekend this weekend with Christmas parties and shoppers."

"The response from the public who have been stopped has been really positive."

"The Police emphasis on the Christmas drink-drive campaign is quite simple: education and enforcement."

He added: "Analysis shows that there is still a large amount of collisions occurring where alcohol is involved."

"If people drink and drive they are running a serious risk of being killed, injured or ending up under arrest in the back of a po-

lice car.

"Anyone charged with drink driving needs to expect a disqualification from driving, which can have massive implications on their job and home life."

"Drivers must also appreciate that if they drink large quantities of alcohol during evening celebrations, they could still be over the limit the following morning."

"The message is simple: you can't calculate your alcohol limit, so don't even try. Hang the keys up this Christmas and take a cab."

The campaign, which is one of the biggest the force has carried out, will continue until January.

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Students will help to run company

STUDENTS from The University of Northampton will help run vital departments of a social enterprise company based in the town.

The university has entered into a partnership with Goodwill Solutions, which is based in Weddell Way, Brackmills, Northampton.

The not-for-profit organisation, which has been running for more than three years, offers schemes to help ex-offenders and drug users

to get back into work and donates funds to local charities.

Managing director of the business, Mike Britton, said: "The partnership will show students how businesses can benefit the community and how businesses work."

"It will also give them good experience in the workplace."

"It's a win-win situation for the university and for us."

The scheme is the first of its kind under-

taken by the university and second and third year students studying on social enterprise courses will run the IT and marketing department for Goodwill as part of dissertations and work.

The social enterprise development director at the university, Professor Simon Denny, said: "Two things will result from our investment. First of all the good that the organisation is doing will be increased, and secondly

it's a good way to provide our students with a fantastic real-world opportunity."

He added: "We know that Goodwill already does good and it can do more with our students' help."

"We can help to make Goodwill an even better business."

"We are delighted to get involved with the business. This scheme will help to make our students leading social entrepreneurs for the future."



Community engagement officers Pc Nick Stephens and Pc Sue Ward

Police facing new challenges in a diverse county

POLICE in Northampton have revealed how they are increasingly targeting cases of honour-based violence, race hate crimes and even female genital mutilation, as more immigrants settle in the town.

Constables Sue Ward and Nick Stephens have recently taken on responsibility for community engagement on a countywide level, having previously covered only the town of Northampton itself.

They now play an increasing role in dealing with hate crimes, liaising with diverse ethnic groups, cracking down on honour-based violence, as well as playing a key role in murder investigations this year.

Two of the county's most recent high-profile investigations were launched following the death of victims from ethnic minorities, with the deaths of the Ding family, in Wootton, and Hungarian Karoly Varga, in Wellingborough.

Pc Ward said: "What will happen in an investigation like that is the family will have a family liaison officer but the community won't have anyone.

"Our role can be more about reassurance and making sure the community is informed."

The pair said it was hard to put a figure on how big the county's ethnic communities were now. However, alongside long-standing immigrant groups they now deal with more people from places such as Somalia, Poland and Afghanistan settling here.

Pc Ward added: "We work with an established Bangladeshi community, which is big, then we have Hindu, Afro-Caribbean and Pakistani communities that have been here for years.

"I think more recently we have had far more Eastern Europeans, Somali and Afghan people coming here."

The pair said each group brought with it individual challenges to policing.

"Immigrants from Somalia arrive in the UK from a country

with little or no law and order, they claimed, while Eastern Europeans could often have a low opinion of authorities.

They have also helped women who have been affected by female genital mutilation, or female circumcision, which is practised in parts of Africa and Asia.

Some Polish drivers in the county created problems on the roads through lack of legal knowledge, with Pcs Ward and Stephens helping to educate them about the UK's laws and regulations.

And during the nationwide riots this year they gave daily updates to community leaders in a bid to reassure communities when rumours began circulating that Mosques and Sikh temples might be attacked.

Pc Stephens added: "Northampton will still take up the majority of our work as this is where our largest and most diverse communities live and work, but we look forward to establishing contacts in other parts of the county too."

Honour violence on rise

NEARLY 40 incidents of honour-based violence were recorded by police across Northamptonshire last year, figures have revealed.

Community engagement officers said they were increasingly trying to crack down on so-called honour-based violence instead of leaving it for ethnic communities to sort out themselves.

Pc Sue Ward said: "Now, as a force, we are much better at recognising issues of honour-

based violence.

"Sometimes in the past I think the assumption has been made that these things have been best left for the community itself to deal with.

"But that is not the case any longer. I think we are better now at identifying where there might be issues."

She said officers were also helping to deal with racially-motivated hate crimes and often have to educate the foreign victims that they have been

subjected to a crime if they suffer abuse.

Pc Ward added: "We realise that some of the groups we deal with suffer hate crimes.

"We work very closely with the hate crime unit about how to deal with community groups as we know there is sometimes a reluctance to report things.

"Sometimes people don't even realise they can report it to us if they have been racially abused in the street."

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Young Noah Holt, aged 4, was drafted in to help promote the new waste bin system



Council set to deliver bins for food waste

MORE than 120,000 households will be able to recycle their food waste in the new year through a new service being launched by local authorities in January.

Figures have revealed leftovers and out-of-date food accounted for around 30 per cent of the refuse sent to landfill in Northamptonshire.

In the New Year, every home in Northampton and Daventry will be able to put out their food waste for a weekly collection on their regular recycling day.

Figures show that in Northampton food waste makes up 43 per cent of the rubbish in our bins.

Councillor David Mackintosh, leader of Northampton Borough Council, said: "Food waste is the smelliest element of most people's bins and now we will be collecting it every

week. This is a real step forward that gives us all a chance to prevent thousands of tonnes of waste being sent to landfill in our county each year. We will also see how much food we waste and be able to do something to save the money that is costing us too."

Every household will receive two food waste bins, a small caddy that can be kept in the kitchen and filled with waste that can be emptied into the outdoor bin, and a larger, 23-litre bin with a lockable lid that can be kept outdoors.

Bin deliveries will begin on January 16 and the first food collection will take place on January 23.

The service will then be gradually phased in between January and March, with each household receiving their bins a week before the service begins in their area.

The food bin can be lined with newspaper or

compostable corn-starched liners, that are available in shops. It has a lockable lid that keeps smells in, pests out and prevents spillage.

It is hoped the scheme will reduce the amount of waste going to landfill, where it rots and produces methane – which contributes to climate change – and it will reduce the amount of landfill tax the county has to pay.

Food waste collected as part of the new service will be recycled at an anaerobic digestion plant in Kettering where it will be turned into electricity and fertiliser.

Information booklets will be distributed to households in early January to explain more about the service.

They will include the 2012 waste and recycling collection calendar.

Some households will have a change to their collection day in the new year.

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Auction end of an era as club closes

FORMER members of the Northampton Royal Air Forces Association Club turned out in force to buy aviation memorabilia at an auction following the closure of the club.

Around 100 items, which were once displayed in the RAFA club in Grove Road, Northampton, were sold.

The club, which had 360 members prior to its closure on October 1, had been in the town for more than 60 years.

Former chairman, Glenn Connor, said: "Everything that was inside the building had to go as we had nowhere to put it and we had a good response to the items. Almost everything was sold."

Items for sale included pictures of aircraft, commemorative plates presented to the club over the years, and model aeroplanes.

Mr Connor added: "Lots of former members bought items which held memories for them from their time at the club."

"We had been accumulating the items for years and some held sentimental value. It was a very nostalgic day for me and the former members."

The club closed due to financial difficulties and a decline in



membership, which secretary and treasurer, Patricia Connor, blamed partly on the introduction of the smoking ban.

At the time of the club's closure, she said: "It has hit all the clubs and obviously being a private members' club we don't get passing trade like the pubs do."

"Unfortunately it has come to this. It's very sad. A lot of memories are wound up in the club."

Mr Connor added: "It's very

sad for everyone that the club had to close but we had no choice. It's the end of an era."

"I think people's attitudes to clubs like these have changed and they are now interested in different things."

He said: "However it's nice to see that people were showing their interest at the auction. It shows that at some stage this club, like others, was a massive part of people's lives."



The RAFA Club auction sold a range of memorabilia

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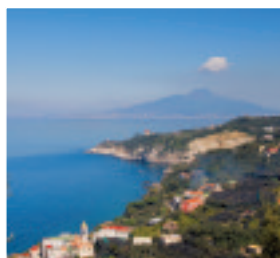
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A HOMELESSNESS fund has allocated more than £200,000 to help make sure nobody is forced to sleep on the streets of Northampton for more than one night.

The town is one of 19 towns and cities in England to get a grant and the money will be spent through Northampton Association for the Accommodation of Single Homeless (NAASH).

A total of £226,000 will enable it to adopt the 'No Second Night Out' initiative, which aims to ensure that anyone who ends up on the streets gets helped quickly so it does not happen again.

Theresa Kelly, manager at NAASH said: "NAASH recognises that in the current economic climate there is a growing group of people who are entering homelessness for the first time.

"We want to respond quickly to new rough sleepers to prevent them from establishing harmful habits and lifestyles.

"NAASH has worked in

close partnership with Northampton Borough Council to develop this approach, and we will continue to do so to ensure the success of the project."

NAASH and the council will use the cash to convert as-yet-unidentified buildings in Northampton town centre into 24-hour supported housing for 11 people who would otherwise be sleeping on the streets.

The project will support new rough sleepers and give them access to intensive, practical help, focusing on issues such as debt management, employment support and family mediation.

Other aims of the project, which will start in March 2012, are to give personal support to entrenched rough sleepers.

The grant is part of an £8m pot being awarded by the Homelessness Transition Fund to 41 projects that aim to eventually help ensure that no one lives on the streets.

Recruitment of staff to work on the project will begin next month.

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Reporter one of first in Olympic venue



Nick Spoors, pictured with fellow Chron runners Helen Buckingham and Nicole Le Marie, will be one of the first people to run in the Olympic stadium

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A JOURNALIST at the Chronicle & Echo has been selected among the first people to run at the London Olympic stadium, in its inaugural public event next year.

Health reporter Nick Spoors was entered in the ballot to run in a five-mile event through the Olympic Park, finishing among 5,000 other

people inside the stadium itself in front of about 10,000 people.

The National Lottery Olympic Park Run will be the first official event at the stadium, meaning Mr Spoors will be among the first people to run in a stadium that will be seen by billions of people at next summer's games.

The 31-year-old, from Delapre, Northampton, said: "I was absolutely blown away

when I got the email saying I'd been successful in the ballot. I've not been able to keep the smile off my face; I'm bursting with pride.

"I absolutely love the Olympics and everything it represents but it has always been something very remote that you watch on TV.

"To run inside an Olympic stadium before many of the athletes, let alone in an arena that will no doubt become

iconic in years to come, is just unbelievable to me.

"I can't wait to get out on that start line."

The event will take place on March 31 next year, with every runner able to invite two people to watch their historic moment as they come down the finish straight that will carry the likes of Welsh world champion hurdler Dai Greene and Usain Bolt come next August.

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Recovery centre will be 'one of the best'

AN INJURY recovery centre costing £8.5 million, which will be open to both elite athletes and the public, is set to open at a Northampton college.

Moulton College is opening the new Sports Therapy and Injury Rehabilitation Centre, only the second of its kind in Europe, on its campus off Pitsford Road next month.

It will feature a range of cutting edge clinical facilities to speed recovery as fast as currently possible from a range of illnesses and injuries and teaching facilities.

Among them will be the only cryotherapy chamber that uses liquid nitrogen in the UK outside Bolton Wanderers Football Club, which has an air temperature of minus 140 degrees Celsius to speed recovery from intense training.

There is also a hyperbaric oxygen chamber and infra-red sauna, as well as a water therapy pool featuring an underwater exercise bike and treadmill for recovery from, for example, knee replacements.

And it has a 25-metre pool, which will also be open to local swimming clubs, which has a lowerable floor to increase its depth and target resistance in different muscles.

Sheena Easton, who will

manage the centre, said: "I'm so excited about this. There is nothing like it anywhere in the country and I hope people will come from far and wide. I've been blown away by what I've seen and it will be a top facility for Northamptonshire to be proud of."

All of the facilities and space at the centre will be available for rent, with new and established private consultants able to base themselves at the college, using the high-tech kit as well as consulting rooms and massage areas.

College bosses are also hopeful the NHS and special interest groups for people with long-term conditions such as multiple sclerosis will be interested. Because the facilities are so rare, they also want to attract use from across the country.

Injuries suffered by rowers, and triathletes would be particularly appropriate for help by the centre and the Cobblers and Saints have already inspected the building to see what benefits local players could get from next year.

Sports rehabilitation students at the college will also get to use the centre while studying.

Miss Easton said: "Hopefully this, as well as the quality of our teaching, will attract the very best to Northampton."



The new Sports Therapy and Injury Rehabilitation Centre at Moulton College is only the second of its kind in Europe

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The battle against turbines now lost

A WIND farm can be built next to the Battle of Naseby site in Northamptonshire, despite officials admitting the large turbines will 'harm its setting'.

Last year, members of Daventry District Council blocked plans to build turbines to the north of Haselbech, near Naseby, because of the impact the development would have on the area.

But national planning inspector, Paul Griffiths, has overturned that decision, meaning six turbines up to 415ft tall can be built.

In his report, Mr Griffiths said: "The wind turbines would introduce another modern element into views into and across the battlefield."

"Their presence would act as a further distraction that would make interpretation more difficult. This would detract from the significance of the battlefield and harm its setting."

"However, while it would introduce movement, the turbines would occupy a limited part of the field of view."

The inspector also argued that electricity firm EON said the turbines would be taken down after 25 years.

But campaigners against the turbines said the development would devastate the area for years to come.

Derryn Rolfe, the chairman of the Stop Kelmars Windfarm group, said: "We're gutted. This development will



The Battle of Naseby is classed as one of the most important battles in British history

have the most devastating effect on the heritage of the area."

EON said it now planned to 'work closely with the community' as it progresses the plans for the wind farm

A spokesman for the firm said: "We firmly believe our proposal represents the right technology, in the right location, to ensure energy security and combat climate change."

The Battle of Naseby in 1645 is classed as one of the most important battles fought in Britain. It saw Parliament's New Model Army destroy King Charles I's army, leading to the modern system of Parliamentary democracy.



Delight at play area

A CELEBRATION marked the official opening of new play equipment in Rectory Farm.

Rectory Farm Residents' Association successfully bid for £12,000 for the equipment from the council's I Love My Park initiative, which has invested £250,000 in Northampton parks.

Keith Holland-Delamere, chairman of Rectory Farm Residents' Association, said: "The young people were very excited when they had the opportunity to choose the new play equipment and we are pleased that it is their favourite design that is now in place."

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Entertainment

Party will be dynamite

MS Dynamite will headline the Roadmender's New Year's Eve party this year.

The double BRIT Award and three time MOBO winner is currently working on her third album.

Random Concept and Subrockerz event will feature a mixture of drum & bass, dub step, jungle, old skool and UK garage.

In the main room Ms Dynamite will be joined by Zinc, Krafty Kuts, Hazard & Harry Shotta, Nicky Blackmarket, Garry K featuring MC Presha, Subzero, Mickey Finn, Majistrate, Logan D, RV, Blackley, Alpha & Warren B, Sleepless & Snypa D and Swiftly.

They will be joined by MCs Skibadee, Eksman, Harry Shotta, Shabba, Trigga, Evil B, Bassman, Presha, Krafty, General C, AC, Danja, Lil Lively and Gav.

In the Bass Arena room, Roksonix, Northbase, Bagafilth and SDS will play.

The night runs from 8pm until 5am.

General admission tickets cost £25, with VIP tickets available.

For more information visit www.randomconcept.com/mailouts/nye2011/nye2011.html.

Ms Dynamite will be at the New Year's Eve party at The Roadmender

Prepare for a great night of folk music

THE Great kNight Folk Club returns during the festive period with a show featuring Linda Watkins and Mike Moyses.

Watkins will be accompanied by Lowestoft-born Moyses, pri-

marily on bass guitar and upright electric double bass.

The gig is on Tuesday, January 3 at The Old White Hart.

Doors open at 8pm and tickets cost £6.

Festive DJ set at pub tomorrow


A festive DJ set takes place at the Lamplighter tomorrow night.

On Friday, December 30, the Lamplighter will host a Voodoo Amplifier festive special featuring Alex and Pat Fish playing blues, soul and rock and roll.

The music starts at 8pm and admission is free.



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Entertainment

FRIDAY

MUSIC

Northampton: Burlesque, King Billy, bottom of Bridge Street.

Northampton: Earth Man Sounds, Jessie from Inspirational Radio, The Crispin, Clare Street, 8pm-late.

Northampton: Tony Gee's disco, Spread Eagle, Wellingborough Road.

Northampton: Steve Clarke disco, Devonshire Club, St James Square, 5pm-8pm*.

Northampton: Disco/karaoke, Molly's Bar, Abington Square.

THEATRE

Northampton: Down the Rabbit Hole, Royal & Derngate underground, 11am and 2.30pm. Box office 01604 624811.

Northampton: Aladdin, Derngate stage, 2pm and 7pm. Box office 01604 624811.

Northampton: Alice in Wonderland, Royal stage, 2.15pm and 7.15pm. Box office 01604 624811.

SATURDAY - NEW YEAR'S EVE

MUSIC

Brafield: Steve Perry (vocalist), WMC, Bedford Road (A428), 8pm.

Northampton: New Year's Eve entertainment at The Garibaldi, Bailiff Street.

Northampton: Black Rose, King Billy, bottom of Bridge Street. Tickets £3 in advance or £5 on the door.

Northampton: New Year's Eve Toga Party with live music by Great Divide, Old White Hart, Cotton End, 8pm-2am. Tickets £12. 01604 709990.

Northampton: Animanía New Year's Eve with live music by Buck Naked, cartoon-favourite fancy dress, The Picturedrome, Kettering Road, 8pm-late. Tickets £15. 01604 230777.

Northampton: New Year's Eve party, Charles Bradlaugh, Earl Street; free.

Northampton: Auntie Ruth's presents the Masquerade Ball at the Black Bottom Club, George Row; drinks reception 8pm, live music from the Whiteroom plus DJ; black tie. Members £20, non-members £25. 01604 233401.

Northampton: The Premonition Show, Queen's Park WMC, Cranbrook Road.

Northampton: Motown and soul disco, Spread Eagle, Wellingborough Road

Northampton: Tripping on Tradition, Thomas a Becket, St James Road.

Northampton: New Year's Eve party with Wordsworth, Molly's Bar, Abington Square.

Northampton: Richie Rich disco, Crown and Anchor, Victoria Road.

Northampton: New Year's Eve disco/karaoke party, Lord Byron, Kingsley Park Terrace, 8pm.

Northampton: Andy Stone, British Rail Club, St Andrew's Road.

THEATRE

Northampton: Alice in Wonderland, 1.15pm and 5.15pm, Royal stage, Box office 01604 624811.

Northampton: Aladdin, Derngate stage, 1pm and 5pm. Box office 01604 624811.

Northampton: Down the Rabbit Hole, Royal & Derngate underground, 1.30pm and 3.30pm. Box office 01604 624811.

OTHER

Uppingham: Come Dancing, New Year's Eve dance, Town Hall, 8pm; £6 includes buffet (bring your own drinks). Newcomers please call 01572 757686.

SUNDAY - NEW YEAR'S DAY

MUSIC

Northampton: Singalong with Sean Grew,

The Garibaldi, Bailiff Street, 7pm.

Northampton: Acoustic open mic jam session, Sir Pickering Phipps, Wellingborough Road, 8.30pm*.

Northampton: Acoustic open mic jam session, Fox and Hounds, Harborough Road, 8pm*.

Northampton: Nightshift, Spread Eagle, Wellingborough Road, 5.30pm-8.30pm.

MONDAY MUSIC

Northampton: Karaoke, Golden Horse, Southampton Road, 4pm-7pm*.

Northampton: Open mic, Lamplighter, Overstone Road, 9pm.

Wellingborough: Five Star Swing, jazz, Ye Golden Lion, 19 Sheep Street, 9pm-11pm; free.

THEATRE

Northampton: Down the Rabbit Hole, Royal & Derngate underground, 1.30pm and 3.30pm. Box office 01604 624811.

Northampton: Alice in Wonderland, 1.15pm and 5.15pm, Royal Theatre, Box office 01604 624811.

Northampton: Aladdin, Derngate stage, 1pm and 5pm. Box office 01604 624811.

OTHER

Broughton: Quiz night, Fox and Hounds*.

Kettering: Kettering Bridge Club, 2pm and 7.30pm; £2.50 per session. Venue details 01536 502795*.

Northampton: Quiz, The Romany, Trinity Avenue, 8pm*.

Northampton: Rob Benedict's pub quiz, Charles Bradlaugh, Earl Street, 8pm*.

Northampton: Northampton Duplicate Bridge, 7.30pm, 16 The Crescent; non-members welcome. 01604 630546*.

Rushden: Chess Club, Indoor Bowling Club, Northampton Road, 7.30pm. 07810 474 969*.



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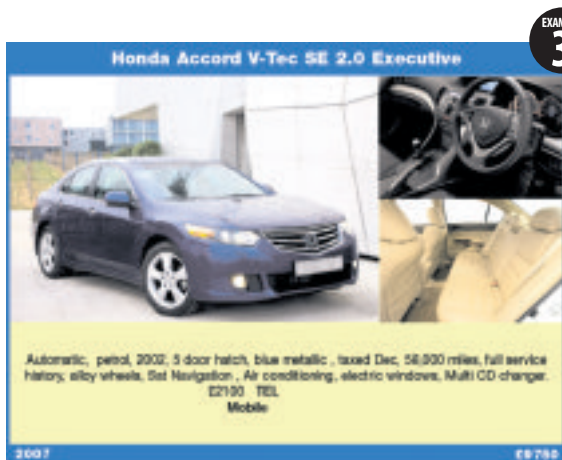
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Entertainment

Chipwrecked and cast away

THE singing, helium-voiced chipmunks are all at sea in Mike Mitchell's zany sequel and so too is the script for this third instalment in the inoffensive series.

Writers Jonathan Aibel and Glenn Berger borrow one subplot from the Tom Hanks film *Cast Away* by stranding a character on a desert island, then have them combat loneliness by drawing faces on sports balls and address the inanimate objects as living, breathing friends.

Hanks earned an Oscar nomination for his emotionally wrought performance.

It's doubtful that *Alvin And The Chipmunks: Chipwrecked* will be nominated for any glittering prizes, although the unfathomable success of previous films at the box office will doubtless continue here.

Mitchell crams his film with musical sequences set to some of the biggest dance floor hits of the past 12 months including Florida's *Club Can't Handle Me* featuring David Guetta, Lady Gaga's *Born This Way*, LMFAO's *Party Rock Anthem* and Katy Perry's *Firework*.

Even if the target audience loses interest in the scrappy storyline, boys and girls will be able to sing along with Alvin and co.

What a treat for parents.

Dave (Jason Lee) heads off on a luxury cruise with singing crit-

ters Alvin (voiced by Justin Long), Simon (Matthew Gray Gubler) and Theodore (Jesse McCartney) and the feisty Chipettes – Britney (Christina Applegate), Eleanor (Amy Poehler) and Jeanette (Anna Faris).

As usual, Alvin gets into various scrapes, incurring the wrath of the ship's captain and former manager Ian (David Cross), who works as the onboard pelican-suited entertainer.

While Dave takes a nap, Alvin and the gang take flight on a kite and are blown onto a tropical island with an active volcano.

There, they meet DHL worker Zoe (Jenny Slate), who has lost her sanity.

While the chipmunks return to nature, Dave and Ian race against time to rescue the animals from their new home before it is covered in molten lava.

Dave blames himself for their predicament but in a rare moment of lucidity, Ian offers some soothing words.

"Hate, anger, regret -- they're not just the members of a girl group I once signed," he counsels.

Alvin And The Chipmunks: Chipwrecked lacks the charm and energy of the earlier films and stranding the animals on an island is a flimsy contrivance to force Alvin to grow up.



The digitally rendered critters warble at regular intervals to stave off our boredom and the Chipettes have their moment in the spotlight when they challenge three feisty femmes to a dance-off in the ship's

disco.

Lee is reduced to screaming Alvin's name at full volume whenever the titular chipmunk gets into trouble, while the two scriptwriters casually mix pop culture references

with the obligatory toilet humour. "Time to turn punishment into funishment," lamely quips Alvin at one point.

His film stumbles aimlessly somewhere between the two.

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Thursday, December 29, 2011

FIRST LOOK: Mazda CX-5

REVIEW BY
MATT KIMBERLEY


Mazda marvel

FACTFILE

CAR: Mazda CX-5 2.2 diesel (standard power), from £22,000 (est).

ENGINE: 2.2-litre dual-turbocharged diesel producing 148bhp and 280lb.ft

TRANSMISSION: Six-speed manual or six-speed automatic, driving the front or all four wheels according to model choice

PERFORMANCE: Top Speed 125mph, 0-62mph in 9.2 seconds

FUEL ECONOMY: TBC

CO2 RATING: 119g/km

TO be fair to Mazda, the company doesn't have the resources of the Toyotas and Volkswagens of this world.

But its engineers put a lot more emphasis on cars as things to be passionate about, and that's the thinking behind the new CX-5 compact SUV.

The automotive world has seen precious little innovation from Mazda over the last couple of years, but now we know why.

Its boffins have been working on quite a lot of different technologies, all bundled together under the banner of SkyActiv.

Weight-saving measures, new engines and construction techniques unique to cars are all part of what amounts to a giant leap forward for the company in terms of satisfying the ever-increasing list of demands that consumers are asking of car-makers.

The CX-5 is destined to arrive properly next April, but I had a chance to take a sneak peek in deepest, darkest Italy, where I drove a selection of pre-production models.

The really pleasing thing is that Mazda has made just as much of a fuss about the pursuit of great driving dynamics as it has about the search for greater efficiency, even though the most innovative advances have come in the latter field.

Everyone at the company still believes cars should be fun, and that's brilliant.

Two new engines have been developed from the ground up, incorporating every advanced piece of design that Mazda could come up with.

The lightweight petrol engine has the highest compression ratio of any petrol-engined mass-produced car in the world.

The diesel, on the other hand, is even more remarkable. Using two turbochargers, one small and one large, turbo lag is

minimised while still allowing for large power outputs.

But it's an astonishing level of attention to detail that has eliminated or minimised lots of different areas of wasted energy to create a 2.2-litre diesel engine that produces 148bhp, 280lb.ft - both big numbers - and just 119g/km of CO2. That makes it all of £30 to tax under the current system - and it's a pretty big engine.

As remarkable as it is on paper, the engine feels every bit as good in use. It pulls hard and is smooth and quiet, making barely a whisper at a fast cruise.

At around 70mph on smooth tarmac it's remarkably hushed, with the only intrusive road noise coming from the rear wheel arches. Arguably they could do with more soundproofing.

Mazda has also retuned the necessary control inputs for this car, making it more directly responsive to how the driver is operating the pedals and steering wheel.

Whereas a lot of cars - older Mazdas included - provide maximum power at only a fraction of full throttle pressure to make their engines seem more potent than they are, the CX-5 offers a little more respect to the driver.

The harder you push the pedal, the quicker you'll go. Acceleration is smoother, and it helps fuel economy as a result.

As a compact SUV, the CX-5 is reasonably tall, with a high driving position that has been optimised to feel as comfortable as possible.

The diagrams to explain all this are quite something, but suffice it to say that the CX-5 has one of the most comfortable and most effective driving positions in the class.

From the driver's seat you can also enjoy the gear change. Inspired by the wonderful MX-5, the 'throw' has been shortened and the shifts have been made more positive than in old

designs, so it really feels like a sporty car rather than a small soft-roader.

This sort of attitude to design creates the simple joy of driving, where the car surpasses any status as merely a tool and becomes something you can find pleasure in; something that makes you smile. It's a dying art but Mazda has recaptured it in the CX-5.

As pre-production cars, the interior quality is... let's say, unfinished. Fortunately Mazda had provided a display-only car with a fully finished interior to poke around. Its design isn't as exciting as the technology behind it, but it's inoffensive and stylish enough.

The CX-5 is the first Mazda to bring together all the SkyActiv technologies into one car, and the results are pretty dramatic.

To combine genuine driving enjoyment with cheap running costs and a high seating position in this sector of the market is a remarkable achievement, and the finished article promises great things.



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Births



Brian and Caterina BRADSHAW are pleased to announce the safe arrival of their Grandson **Sam Luca** born on Friday 16th December 2011, weighing 6 lbs, 1 ozs. With love and thanks to Carla and Darren.

21st Birthday



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Obituaries

BIRD Nee Ling

On Dec 16th at Cynthia Spencer Hospice Irene (sis) aged 88 passed away suddenly after a short illness. Sister to Hetty, Sister-in-law to Vic and Aunt to Jennifer. Sleep peacefully Sis xxx

CAMBRIDGE Patrick

Dearly loved Dad to Neil and Karen. Grandee to Shannon and Danny.

As angels keep their watch up there, Please God let them know, that we down here do not forget, We love and miss him so.

Sleep peacefully. x x x

In Memoriam

BEIJERS Phyllis

23.12.2000

The tears in my eyes I can wipe away, but the ache in my heart will always stay.

Love
Jim and Family
xxxxx

BURDETT Peter

22nd December 2010.

Fondly remembered Brother of Norman and Georgina.

Always in our thoughts
x

In Memoriam

Cambridge Patrick

1st Anniversary.
27.12.2010.

*You left without good bye.
I will always love and miss you.
Your loving Wife Ellen (Nell Rae) and Son's Arthur and John.*

God Bless
xxx



Cambridge Patrick

27.12.2010.

*Dear Dad to Teresa & Tony.
Grandee to Kevin, Ellen, Connor, Kane & Calum.*

*Love you to Cork and back.
God Bless you
xxx*



DUNKLEY — Moira Heather.
Greatly missed but always in our thoughts. Bill, Lesley, Peter & Helen, Gary & Colleen.

HASLER George

26/12/06.

Treasured memories of happy days. Reunited with Mum. Loved and missed by all the family.
God Bless.
xxx



JOYCE

Liliana Veronica

(In Princisgh)

Formerly of Udine, Italy. Passed away December 25th 2002.

Treasured memories of my Wife Liliana for 56 years. Your memory will live with me forever.

Tuo Beni (Bernard).

In Memoriam

SMITH — Jim
Passed away two years ago. Still missed everyday. Love Jackie and Family x



SMITH James

Died 2009. Loving Husband, Father and Grandfather.

Along the road to yesterday, that leads us straight to you. Are memories of happy days together, that we all once knew. As we look upon your photos, sweet memories we recall. A face so full of sunshine and a smile for one and all.

Love always
Barbara
x x



SMITH Valerie

You're still the brightest star in the sky.

Miss you.
Mick, Juliette, John, Clive, Julie and Kyle
xx

SMITH Jim

Precious memories I still hold of you. In distant light I see your smile too. In Gods hands is where you lay at rest. My Precious Pap, God took the best. Stacey, Vince, Gabrielle, Callum and Shayne.
xxx

Birthday Memories

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- Entrance to the gardens at Keukenhof
- A visit to Amsterdam



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Mercury Sport



OFF YOU GO – John Johnson is sent off during the Cobblers' Boxing Day defeat to Burton Albion at Sixfields

PICTURE: SHARON LUCEY

Boothroyd ready to make major tweaks

AIDY BOOTHROYD says the Cobblers will be in 'massive transition' in the next two months.

The Town boss is anticipating a busy few weeks, with two games in three days at the end of this week and the opening of the January transfer window.

And Boothroyd anticipates some fairly major tweaks to his squad in the near future.

"I want to have a balance of hungry, fit, organised, talented people that are willing to go above and beyond what they think they can do," said Boothroyd, who has confirmed

he is in talks with veteran Scottish defender Christian Dailly but that the player is one of four the club are currently negotiating with.

"When you've got that you've always got a chance because you can win games that other teams won't necessarily.

"We are in a massive transition in the next two months and the next few months after that will be an even bigger transition.

"The six million-dollar man had a new arm, a new eye and everything else and I think we're going to have a whole new body by the start of next season."

The loan deals of Saido Berahino

– who was excellent in the Boxing Day defeat to Burton Albion – and Kelvin Langmead expire in January and Boothroyd will need to decide whether to keep them or send them back to their parent clubs.

The decision on Langmead could be affected by the return to fitness of Byron Webster, who returned to training this week after recovering from a foot injury sustained in September.

"I like both the loan players but it's got to suit the club financially, it's got to suit the players and it's got to suit me," he said.

"I think Kelvin was really unlucky in my first game but he's a really

genuine guy and I do like him.

"But we've got Byron Webster coming back, John Johnson and Ben Tozer can play at centre-back and so I've got a few little quandaries there.

"And as far as Saido is concerned, he's a young man with a lot of talent who is using us as a bit of a stage at the moment.

"I'm going to speak to him and see if he wants to continue with us for a period of time and if he does then we'll discuss that."

"If he doesn't then fine, we'll move on. I'm feeling a bit like a plate-spinner at the moment and I'll be a lot happier when some of the plates fall and smash."

Jim: We need a killer instinct

JIM MALLINDER says Saints have to develop a killer instinct as they look to step up their Premiership challenge.

Saints travel to Newcastle this weekend looking to add clinical edge to their game after throwing away what could prove to be a valuable point last time out.

After scoring three tries to race into a 22-3 lead in the first half against Bath Saints blew a series of chances to add a bonus point.

Mallinder was more than a little frustrated after a clash that even saw Saints let Bath back into the game with two yellow cards that saw them down to 13 men.

The Saints director of rugby said: "At half-time we talked about pushing on and to do that by doing exactly the same things we had done in the first half; looking after the ball, keeping it nice and simple.

"But unfortunately we forced it a little bit too much and that was frustrating.

"It is an area we need to improve. I think if you score three tries in the first half then everybody expects the bonus point and you want to crack on and get it.

"We had our opportunities. One example was when we had a great scrum in midfield, got a penalty and if we had gone left instead of right when Lee Dickson got well tackled, we would have walked in. It is about being clinical and taking our opportunities.

"But you have always got to be happy winning games. I thought our first half was very good, we took our opportunities well.

"The half-backs, Ryan Lamb in particular, controlled the game with some really good options."

Not killing off games is an accusation that has haunted Saints in recent times, the Heineken Cup final being a prime example, while at Munster they were on course for a famous win but failed to nail it as Ronan O'Gara kicked a last-gasp winner and in the league at Leicester they again let a lead slip at the death.

"We should be experienced enough and we need to work on all these different situations," said Mallinder.

"We are learning. We went down to 13 men against Bath and you never want to do that.

"But I think what we did then was good, the way we looked after the ball and slowed the clock down was good. We are learning lessons but we have got to learn to kill games off."



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